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GREECE, ALBANIA and NORTHERN EPIRUS

Edward Capps

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U.S. SENATE RESOLUTIONS

(Senate Resolution 324) - Introduced by Senator Lodge, and passed by the Senate unanimously on May 17, 1920.

"Resolved, that it is the sense of the Senate that Northern Epirus (including Corytza), the Twelve Island of the Aegean, where a strong Greek population predominates, should be awarded by the Peace Conference to Greece and become incorporated in the Kingdom of Greece."

Congressional Record. Volume 59, Part VB, p. 7100.

(Senate Resolution 82) - Submitted by Senator Pepper; referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations. March 27 (Legislative day, March 5), 1946, Reported by Mr. Connelly, without amendment. Considered and agreed to July 29, 1946.

"Resolved, that it is the sense of the Senate that Northern Epirus (including Corytza), the Twelve Islands of the Aegean Sea, known as the Dodecanese Islands, where a strong Greek population predominates, should be awarded by the Peace Conference to Greece and become incorporated in the territory of Greece."

Congressional Record. Volume 92, Pages 2644 and 10336.

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**Chicago essays on
World History and Politics**

1

GREECE, ALBANIA and NORTHERN EPIRUS

By EDWARD CAPPS

ILLUSTRATED

WITH AN EPILOGUE

AND INDEX

By BASIL J. PHOTOS



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EDWARD CAPPS, was born at Jacksonville, Illinois, December 21, 1866. He died at Princeton, New Jersey, August 21, 1950.

He received his A.B. from Illinois College in 1887, his Ph.D. from Yale in 1891. Professor of Greek in the University of Chicago, 1892-1907. Professor of Classics at Princeton, 1907-1936, and Emeritus Professor till his death. Lecturer at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, 1936-1941. He published a short History of Greek Literature "From Homer to Theocritus" and many articles on classical archaeology, philology and ancient history. He was the founder and the first editor of **CLASSICAL PHILOLOGY**, editor-in-chief of the University of Chicago Decennial Publications and from its foundation till his death he was the American Editor of the great Loeb Classical Library.

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GREECE, ALBANIA and NORTHERN EPIRUS

By EDWARD CAPPS

On frequent occasions it has been proposed that the solution of the Albanian question lies in the partition of that country between Greece and Yugoslavia. Yet Greeks would surely be reluctant today to accept such a division of Albania, since this would mean their annexing parts of Albania containing a large Albanian minority. This would destroy the condition of present Greece which has given to the country its greatest strength and stability—the homogeneity of its people. It is also thought that Greece would find it to her interest to have on its northern border an Albanian nation with which she might cultivate relations of real friendship. Much effort toward a rapprochement between the two peoples had already been made before the war, by private organizations in both countries. Albanian students entered the University of Athens and the Greek Military Schools. Commercial relations were progressively improving before the war. It would seem that the two countries have a community of interests and should work together for the preservation of peace and their economic advancement. Their economics are supplementary and not competing.

For such a solution the international security of a free and independent Albania is indispensable. The country will need for a considerable time outside assistance to reach this state. It is true that the people were devoid of cohesion and political experience and have long been an aggregate of tribes with inherited quarrels. Lack of education has prevented a self-conscious and self-reliant nationalism, and geography has made union and commercial and political development difficult. Hence the obnoxious Italian grip which dominated completely the country from 1925 to 1939, bringing about Italian intrigues

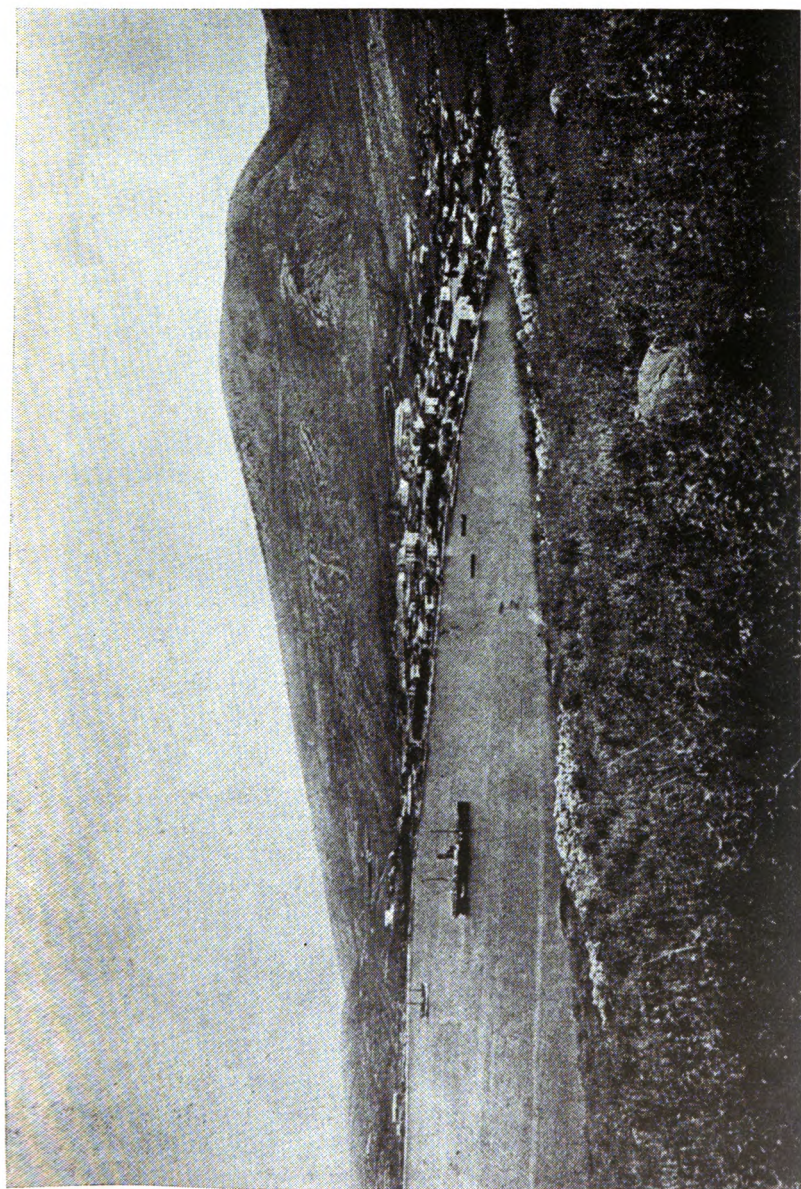
and machinations in the Balkans. There are many hopes that, with a benevolent international tutelage, Albania can be put on its feet and lead a healthy political life.

In addition to this indispensable requirement of international protection of the independence of Albania, Greece is entitled to such a rectification of the southern frontiers of Albania as would restore to Greece the region of Northern Epirus, to which Greece was always entitled on ethnological grounds and the cession of which would promote the economic welfare of the population and Greece's security requirements.

The question of Northern Epirus has been one of the most insistently disputed, involving as it did rival claims as well as the interests of Great Powers.

Included until 1940 in the State of Albania, Northern Epirus is the region north of the present boundary of Greece where the Greeks threw back the invading Fascist army. Its precise extent and population have never been clearly defined, but the area includes broadly the porvinces of Korytsa, Argyrocastro and part of the province of Janina, viz., the counties of Korytsa Starovo, Koloria, Argyrocastro, Khimara, Delvino, Lioscoviki, Tepeleni, Premeti, Pogonion and Philiates—a territory slightly larger than the State of Delaware, inhabited by a population of about 225,000.

Northern Epirus is of great strategic importance. It faces the extreme heel of Italy just below the narrowest point in the neck of the Adriatic. Its position makes it the natural way of entry and exit to the western Balkans. On the other hand, its coast is for the most part steep and its only harbor is at Santi-Quaranta (in Greek: Aghioi Saranta, "Forty Saints"). There is a trunk road from Santi-Quaranta to Argyrocastro and to Korytsa. For the rest, there are only a few paths from the coast to the interior. It is traversed by rivers, the most important of which is the Viosa or Voyussa River, and valleys that provide natural routes. Another trunk road was con-



SANTI QUARANTA: View of the Port and the Town

structed in recent years from Valona, north of Northern Epirus, through Premeti to Korytsa.

This is an agricultural and stock raising country. Grain, maize and olive oil are its most important products, with tobacco grown in certain sections. Its extensive forests are still nearly in virgin state and while mineral deposits are believed to exist, no exploitation has ever been undertaken.

We are wont to identify Hellenism with the parts of the ancient world which bear the mark of Hellenic culture or the names of which are linked with historical events reported by ancient writers. This accounts for our ignorance of Epirus and of many other parts of continental Greece. Epirus, meaning mainland, in contradistinction to the well-known neighboring island of Kerkyra (Corfu), was inhabited in the Hellenic era by the Molossians, whose rulers claimed direct descent from Pyrrhus, son of Achilles. These people had no racial similarity to the Illyrians, who inhabited the northern and central sections of pre-war Albania. Thucydides quotes the testimony of Herodotus in the hellenicity of the region and Polybius confirms, saying that Greece begins to the South of the Acrokeraunian Mountains, that divide Northern Epirus from Albania at Khimara on the coast, Kleissura in the centre and Lake Prespa in the east. We find Themistocles, when banished by the Athenians, receiving the hospitality of Admetus in Epirus. Later Philip of Macedonia married an Epirote princess. And it was a King of Epirus Pyrrhus, who gave the last battles of the Greek world against the Romans. Both Southern and Northern Epirus were then part of Pyrrhus Kingdom and were generally recognized as Greek.

The cultural connection of Epirus with Greece is eminently testified to by the most ancient and venerable of all Hellenic sanctuaries, the Pelasgian Dodona, famous throughout the Greek world, dedicated to Zeus, where the responses to the oracle gathered by listening to the rustling of an old oak tree, the seat of the deity. The sanctuary and its



**NORTHERN EPIRUS: Stele with an ancient Epirot Warrior (3rd c.b.c).
in Relief and Inscription in Greek, found in Selenitza.**

Ugolini: "Albania Antica" Vol. I, p. 193, N95 (Ancient Nymphaeum)

reverence by the Greeks dated from the time of Homer, who refers to it both in the Iliad and in the Odyssey.

During the Byzantine times Epirus, northern and southern, formed part of the Eastern Greek Empire and at the capture of Constantinople by the crusaders in 1204, Epirus formed an independent Greek principality under Byzantine princes. And although the force of invasions during the Middle Ages tended to compress Illyria and Epirus together, the ancient distinction between the two groups of people has always been preserved.

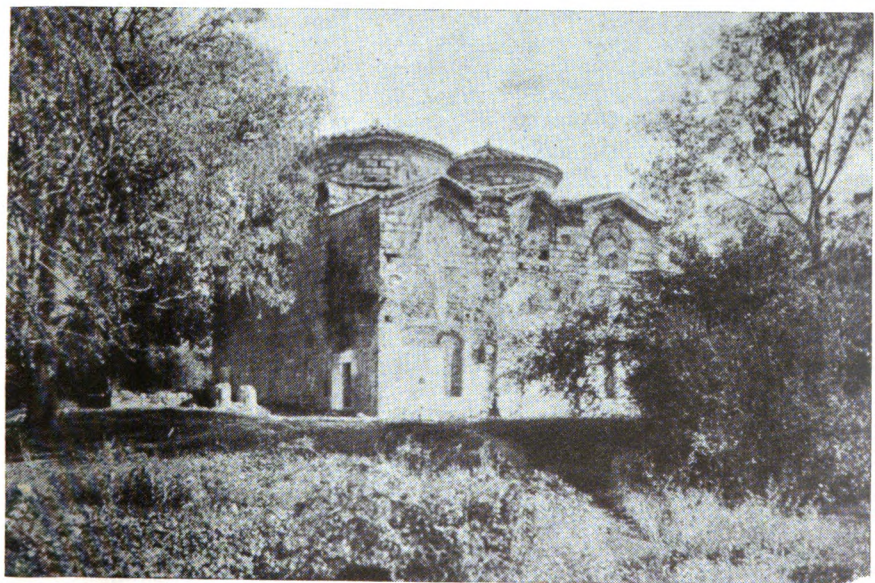
The Hellenic character of Northern Epirus under the Turkish rule is best proved by the abominable crimes against its Greek population perpetrated by the Albanian tyrant of Janina, Ali Pasha, described by the French historian and diplomatic representative of Napoleon at his Court, Pouqueville. The slaughtering of the Greeks, the rape of women and the burning of homes described by him took place in Lucovo, Oudessovo, Hagios-Vassileios, Nivitsa, Boba, Delvino, Dredgsi—all in the region between Argyrocastro and Santi-Quaranta in Northern Epirus.

When the people of Southern Greece rose against the Ottoman Empire in the War of Liberation in 1821, the inhabitants of Northern Epirus joined the fight and took a prominent part in the struggle for independence. Indeed, they had a large part in bringing on the War of Liberation, as great numbers of them formed part of the "Philiki Etairia," the secret society which prepared for the struggle. Two of the three founders of this society were Epirotes, Skoufas and Tsakaloff, the third being Xanthos, a Dodecanesian.

Toward the end of the Greek revolution of 1821, deputies from the whole of Epirus were sent and took part in the Fourth Greek National Assembly held in July 1829 at Argos. And while the Great Powers in their effort to maintain as far as possible the integrity of the Ottoman Empire did not include in the new Kingdom of Greece the whole of Epirus or even Thessaly, delegates from Epirus again took



APOLLONIA (Pojani) The Narthex of the Byzantine Church

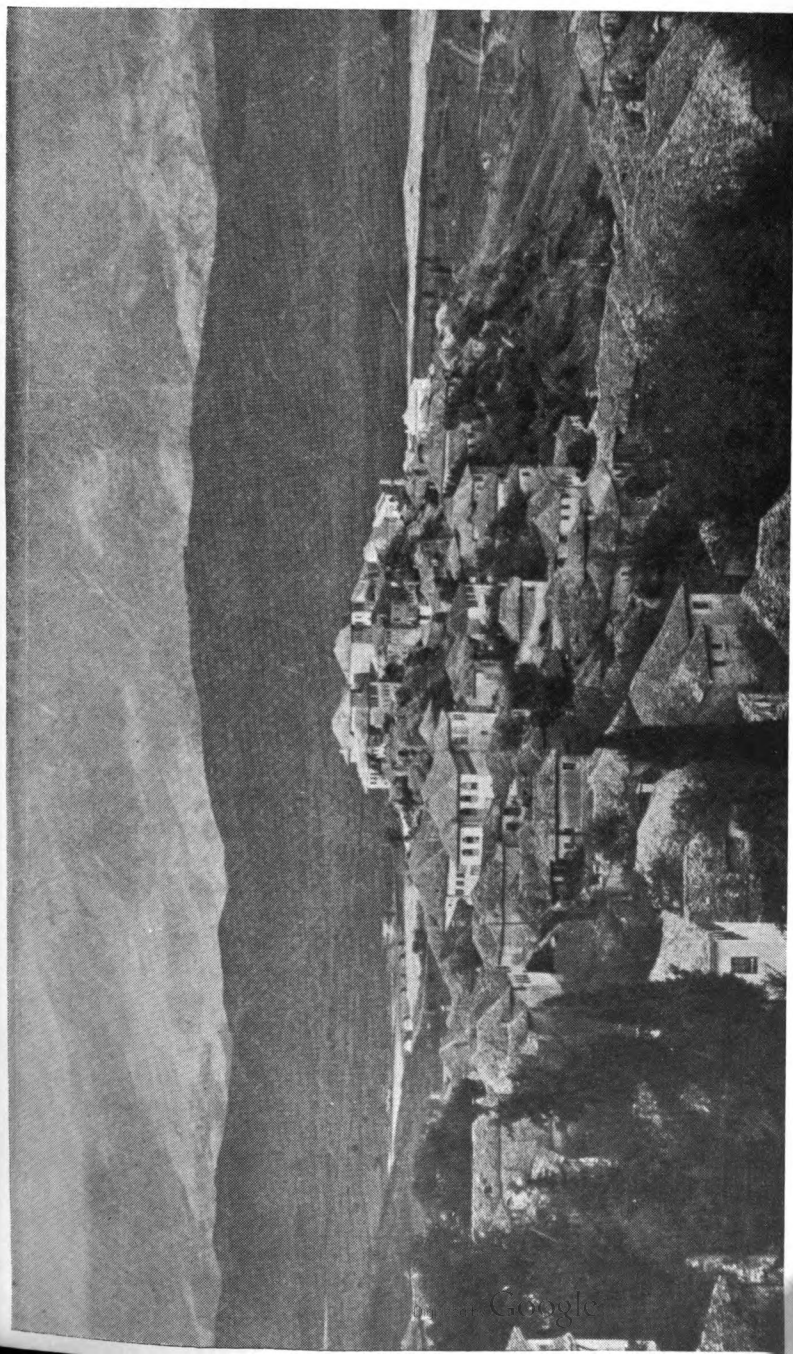


**MESOPOTAMOS (Near Delvino) The Byzantine Church of St. Nicholas,
built on the ruins of a Greek Temple of the Hellenistic period**

part in the deliberations of the Constitutional Convention of 1843 which adopted the first Parliamentary regime in Greece.

During the past century of the life of modern Greece, Epirus has been the heart of Hellenism. A striking evidence of this is the patriotism of Epirotes, who devoted vast fortunes to educational and social institutions of modern Greece. Practically all the higher educational centres of Greece, the University of Athens, the Polytechnic Institute, the Academy of Athens, the Museum of Fine Arts, the marble Stadium of Athens and most of the colleges, are due to the lavish patriotism of Epirotes. A few names will suffice: Arsakis, who built four great women's colleges in Athens, Constantinople, Larissa and Janina, was a North Epirote from Chotachovo, near Argyrocastro. Zappas, the founder of the Museum of Fine Arts in Athens and of many schools, was from Lambovo, near Argyrocastro. Zographos, the founder of the Greek Zographion College in Constantinople and the Zographion Hospital in the same city, was born in Kestorati, near Tepeleni. His son, George Zographos, became a prominent political leader in Greece, served as Foreign Minister and in 1913 became the President of the Autonomous State of Northern Epirus. Pangas of Korytsa gave his entire wealth for schools in Greece. Michael Anagnos, a famous and honored citizen of Boston, left all his fortune for schools in Northern Epirus.

These patriots were representative types of many emigrants from Northern as well as Southern Epirus, who expanded throughout the Hellenic lands and the Hellenism of the "diaspora." Another type of emigrant from Epirus is the mass of artisans of all kinds that roamed all over Greece. Artisanry is an ancient Epirote tradition. Leaving their homes for several months, they sought work as stone masons, carpenters, tailors, tinsmiths and silversmiths—returning from time to time to their home with their earnings. Their adventures and hardships, and the solitude in which their mothers and wives were left behind, gave rise to Greek folk songs of sadness and beauty. They



ARGYROCASTRO: View of the Town

kept the Greek tradition alive notwithstanding the ruthless persecution of a cruel master. They managed even to have Greek schools, which before the Balkan War of 1912 numbered more than two hundred in Northern Epirus.

Arnold Toynbee was right, then, when, calling attention to the fact that Greek nationalism is not an artificial concept of theorists but a real force which impelled all fragments of Greek-speaking populations to make sustained efforts towards political union within the national state, he pointed to the problem of Northern Epirus (Khimara, Argyrocastro and Korytsa) as the most striking example of the attractive powers of Hellenism. He thought that Greek culture under the Turkish yoke had accumulated a store of latent energy, which converted itself into a vigorous national revival.

The recent history of Northern Epirus dates from the Balkan War of 1912. The Greek army occupied this region as well as the rest of Epirus early in 1913. Normally she should have retained this territory as well as the other lands ceded by Turkey to the Allied States and divided among them. The question of Albanian independence had not been raised at that time. Albanian patriots worked for autonomy rather than independence, but there were two European powers, Italy and Austria-Hungary, which were intensely interested in the Albanian problem and had conflicting interests. This conflict was summed up by the late Mr. Tittoni, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, on May 14, 1904, in a speech to the Italian Parliament. "Albania in itself is not of great importance," he said. "Its real value consists in its ports and its coasts, the possession of which for either Austria-Hungary or Italy would signify incontestable supremacy in the Adriatic."

So when a third power, Greece, was seeking to annex Southern Epirus with the port of Valona and the island of Sasseno, Rome and Vienna made common cause and received the support of Berlin. France and her ally, Russia, supported the Greek claims. But in the presence of threats that Austria-

Hungary and Italy were planning to occupy the country for the purpose of dividing it between them, Sir Edward Grey, British Foreign Minister, worked for a compromise between the Italian and Greek claims to the southern frontier of Albania.

As has been somewhat cynically said, the discovery of the Albanian question was due to the existence of two harbors on the Albanian coast: Durazzo and Valona. Albania's creation as an independent state then seduced the European diplomacy, and at the negotiations concerning the southern frontier at the Conference of London in 1913, Greece yielded to Italy on Valona but she insisted that the line be drawn along strategic, economic and ethnographic lines. She claims the port of Santi-Quaranta, since to leave the coast opposite Corfu to another power would create a permanent danger to Greece—a prophetic statement. She claimed the important district of Argyrocastro, which is geographically tributary to Santi-Quaranta and, if separated from the port, would be condemned to stagnation. For the same reason she claimed the district of Korytsa, since communicating with the sea by Janina and Santi-Quaranta it forms with them an indivisible unit. Besides the strategic and economic arguments, Greece also justified the annexation on ethnographic grounds, asserting that two-thirds of the inhabitants were Greeks.

A stream of requests for union with Greece deluged the London Conference for several months from Epirotes of the various districts and towns of Northern Epirus. They asked for an international committee to examine the aspirations and sentiments of the population. The London Conference accorded these requests little attention, preoccupied as it was with avoiding the rupture of the Conference and the precipitation of a European war. Accordingly, in August 1913, it accepted the proposals of Italy and Austria-Hungary, and fixed the southern frontier of Albania so as to include Northern Epirus in the new state, thus sacrificing the national rights of these populations to the selfish and imperialistic interests of the aforesaid Powers.

In reaching this solution the Great Powers made, as has been said, a basic mistake; they failed to consult the population concerned. The result was that while an international commission appointed by the Conference after very little investigation and much fundamental disagreement fixed the details of the frontier in the Protocol of Florence of December 17, 1913, the population revolted and an autonomous state of Northern Epirus sprang into being in February 1914, including Khimara, Argyrocastro, Santi-Quaranta, Delvino and Korytsa, with a Greek Epirote leader, Zographos, as its President; it refused to recognize the Protocol in question. Greece remained strictly neutral. Finally the inhabitants of that area succeeded in the adoption of the Protocol of Corfu of May 17, 1914, which embodied special administrative and educational measures, safeguarding their national and cultural rights. International recognition of this Protocol was made by a declaration of the Great Powers, including Italy and Austria-Hungary, to the Greek Government on July 1, 1914.

Within a few months, the first World War broke out, and in October 1914, Greece was invited by the Allies, including Italy, to occupy Northern Epirus, a fact which is a further proof of Greek rights over that territory.

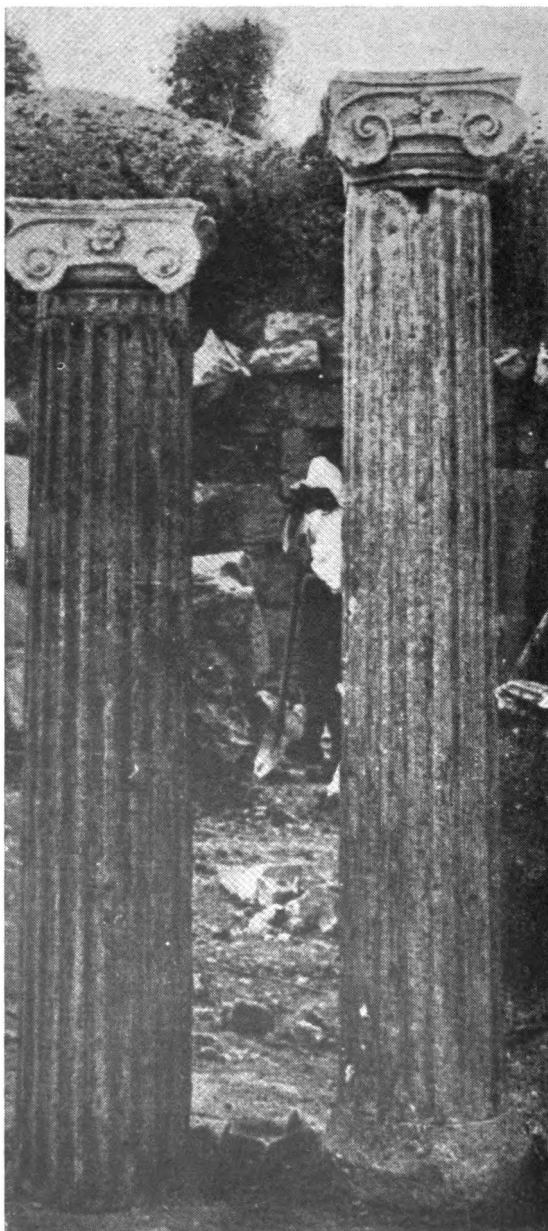
By the secret Treaty of London in 1915, Italy bargained her entry into the war at the side of the Allies and was promised the foothold in Albania which she had long coveted, and in 1917, taking advantage of internal difficulties in Greece, she occupied for a time both Northern and Southern Epirus, but later limited its occupation to Northern Epirus.

At the Peace Conference an agreement between Italy and Greece, known as the Tittoni-Venizelos Agreement, was reached on July 29, 1919, by the terms of which Italy agreed to support the Greek claims to Northern Epirus, in a kind of general settlement of the questions outstanding between the two countries.

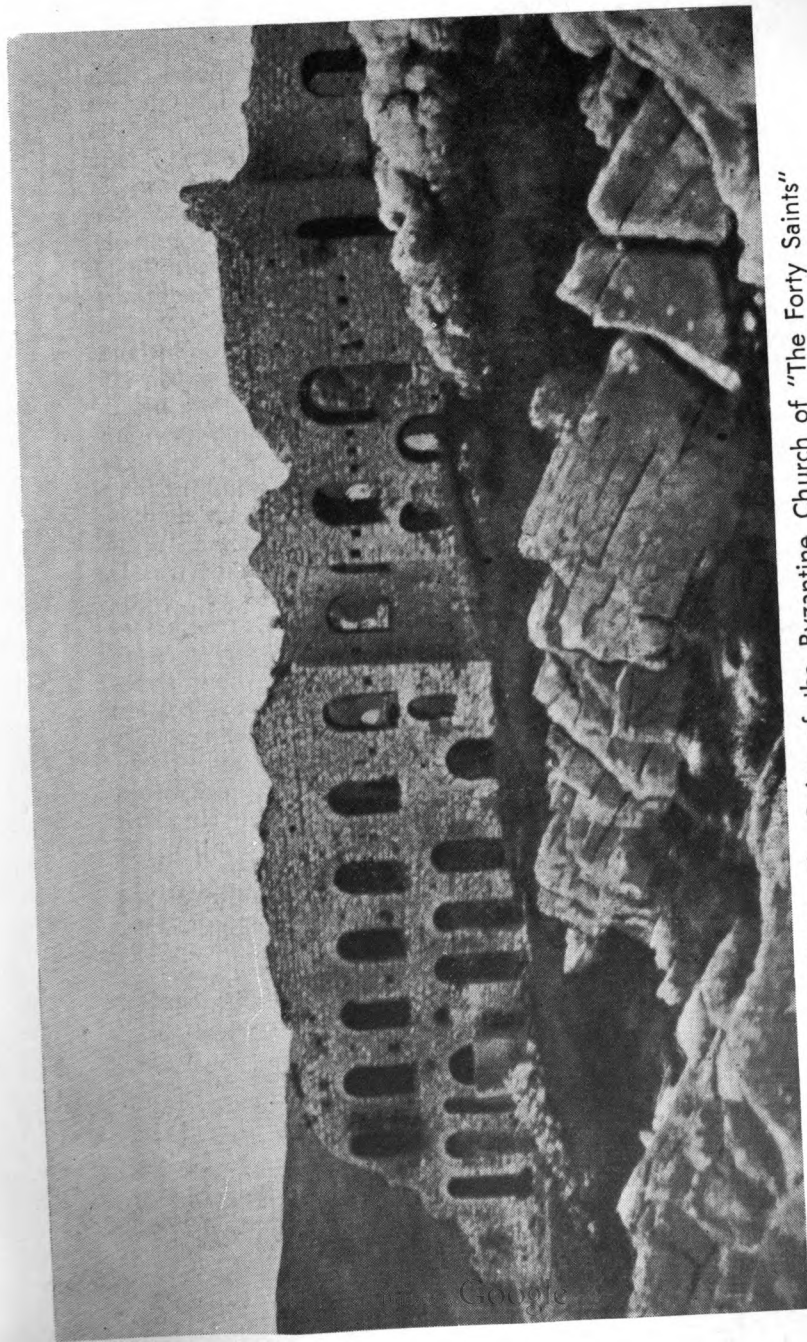
In return for heavy Greek sacrifices, Italy recognized Greek rights not only in Northern Epirus,



but also in the Dodecanese Islands. The calm, however, did not remain unbroken for long. Italy decided soon thereafter not to honour her signature of the 29th of July, 1919. On July 22, 1920, Count Sforza delivered an official note to the Greek Minister at Rome stating that "decisions of the allies on the subject of Asia Minor and the nationalistic affirmations of the Albanian people have obliged the Italian government to modify the ends which they proposed to attain and to establish a new policy relative to the safeguarding of Italian interests in



APOLLONIA: Ionic Columns with Macedonian Capitals from a Hellenistic Temple. Macedonia and Epirus were closely connected from the ancient times.



SANTI QUARANTA: The Ruins of the Byzantine Church of "The Forty Saints"

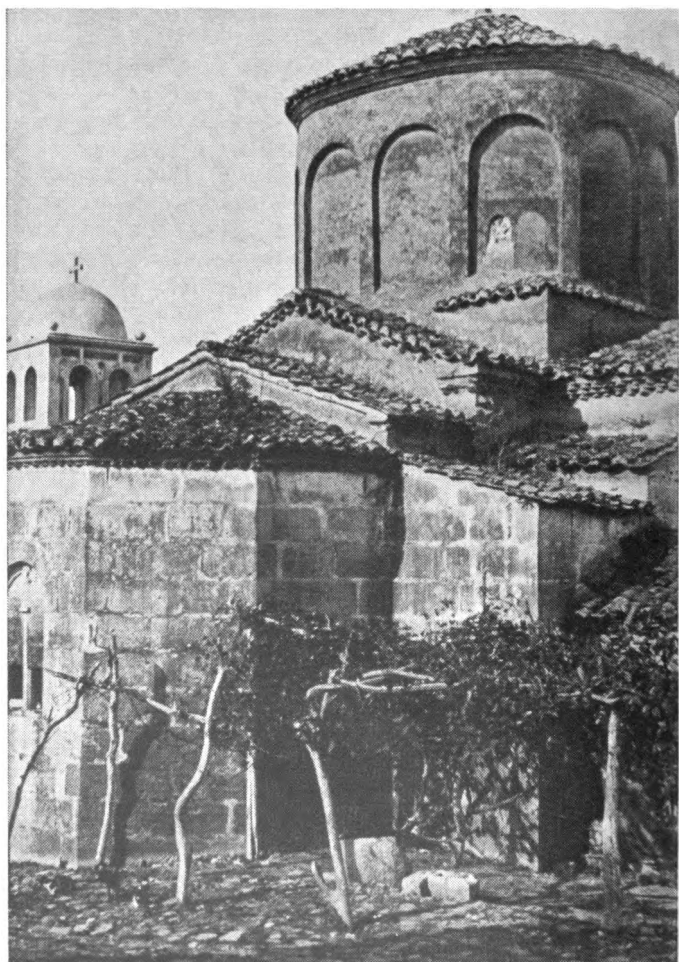
these regions." Count Sforza who delivered this note to the Greek Minister, explained later in his book, "Makers of Modern Europe" published in 1930, the real reason for the denunciation of the agreement of 1919. "When I came to power in July 1920," he writes, "and took cognizance of this agreement which Tittoni had kept secret, I absolutely failed to see how it could be of any use to Italy . . . Albania, to my mind, was to come under the sphere of Italian influence, but not as a result of a juridical solution wounding Albanian pride and working against the very force of Italian expansion in Albania. This being so—and bent on setting Italian policy toward ways which seemed to me more in conformity with our interests—I denounced the Tittoni-Venizelos agreement that meant for us just nothing but a series of burdens with no compensatory counterpart." The denunciation was never agreed to by Greece. Indeed, when the Treaty of Sèvres was to be signed, Mr. Venizelos, Prime Minister of Greece, insisted on Italy's performance and it was necessary for him to leave this conference in order to bring Italy into line and compel her to sign a new agreement on the 10th of August 1920 for the cession of the Dodecanese Islands. At the same time, Italy was compelled to accept the decision of the British, American and French delegations which recognized the justice of the Greek views concerning Northern Epirus. Greece, in the meantime, obtained a decided recognition of her rights over Northern Epirus when the Senate of the United States on May 17, 1920, adopted unanimously the following resolution (Senate Resolution 324):

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that Northern Epirus (including Corytsa), the Twelve Islands of the Aegean, and the Western Coast of Asia Minor, where a strong Greek population predominates, should be awarded by the Peace Conference to Greece and become incorporated in the Kingdom of Greece.

The American, British and French delegations at the Paris Conference were convinced that the western portion of Northern Epirus, comprising the districts of Santi-Quaranta and Argyrocastro and the easternmost portion including the district of Korytsa, were inhabited by a people with a Greek national consciousness. The central portion, sparsely populated and economically unimportant, was Albanian.

But Greece was then and until 1922 engaged in the fateful Greco-Turkish war in Asia Minor. Italy and France made common cause against England and Greece, and America had left the European Councils. The Asia Minor catastrophe and many problems arising from the settlement of one million and a half refugees in Greece had caused the loss of any bargaining position for Greece. Albania was admitted to the League of Nations and signed a declaration to protect national minorities on October 2, 1921. Yugoslavia itself, tending to a rapprochement with Italy, abandoned her claims on a portion of northern Albania and advocated the re-establishment of the frontier of 1913. Thus everything conspired to conclude the question of Northern Epirus against Greece, with the result that a new Florence Protocol on January 27, 1925, ceded again all of Northern Epirus to Albania.

During the process of drawing up the southern frontier of Albania, Fascist Italy staged what has rightly been termed "one of the most infamous examples of international violence." In August, 1923, the Italian General Tellini was murdered at a point close to the Greek-Albanian frontier under circumstances that have never been satisfactorily explained. Italy made exorbitant demands on Greece, its navy bombarded Corfu, a demilitarized city, killing a considerable number of people, and occupied the island; Mussolini refused the intervention of the League of Nations, but was finally compelled by the firm stand of the small nations in the League, and the attitude of Great Britain to evacuate Corfu, but not before the Conference of Ambassadors at



APOLLONIA (POJANI): BYZANTINE CHURCH

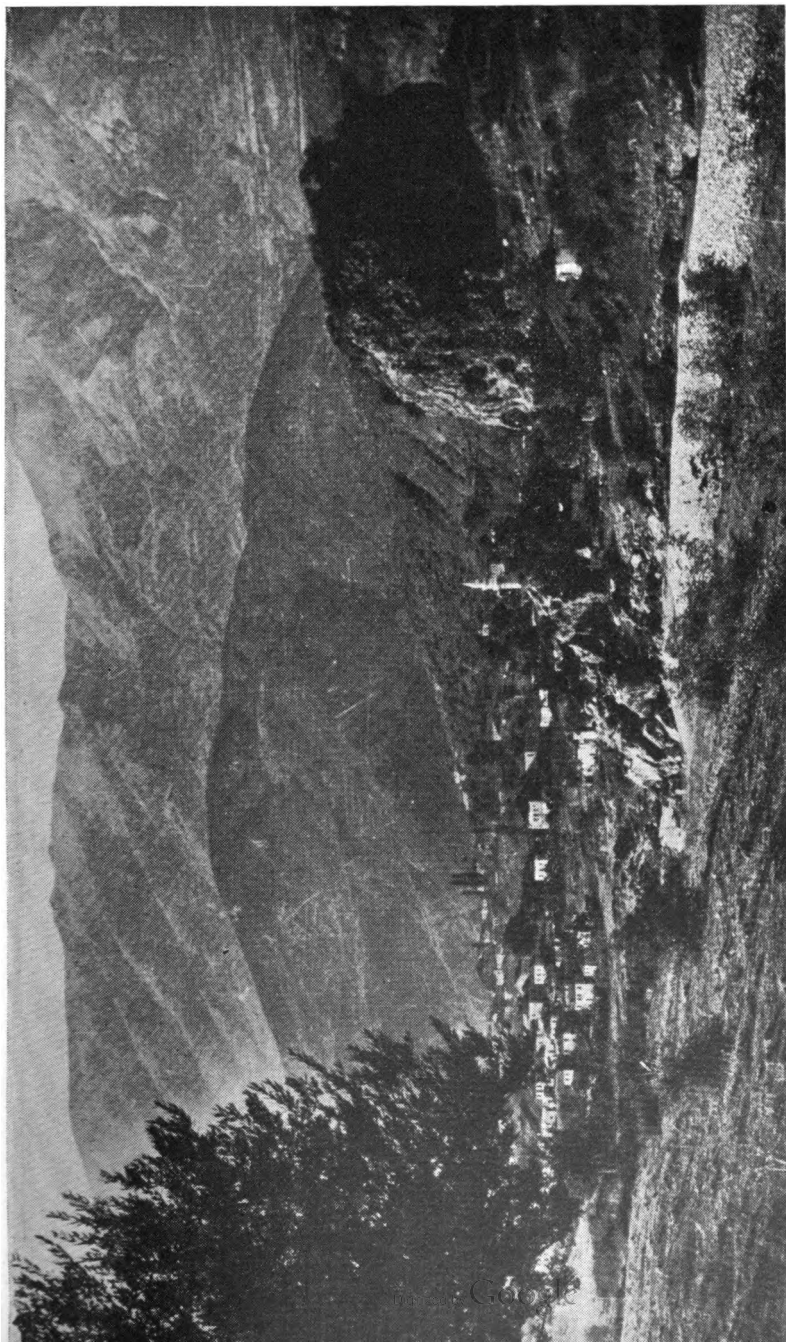


AVLON (VALONA): BYZANTINE CHURCH TRANSFORMED TO A MOSQUE

Paris virtually conceded everything Italy had demanded, including payment of an indemnity by Greece of about \$2,500,000.

Meantime the Albanian declaration of October 2, 1921, regarding minorities, which contained a pledge for the preservation of the Greek character of Northern Epirus, did not accomplish its object. Already the League Commission investigating conditions in southern Albania in 1923 noted that many of the inhabitants failed to realize that the status of southern Albania had been definitely determined by the Conference of Ambassadors; that "There was a strong and growing discontent among the Christian population in Southern Albania"; that while these people paid the greatest part of the Albanian state budget, only a small proportion of the total was expended for their needs. Thereafter Fascist Italy, with its powerful influence on the Albanian government, eager to accept Italian bounties, subjected this Greek population to a harsh persecution which compelled the Greek inhabitants to emigrate or drove them to abandon everything Greek. Greek schools were gradually closed down with the result that they showed a continuous decline. The pre-war number of over 200 schools in Northern Epirus was reduced to 78 in 1925, 60 in 1928, 43 in 1931, 10 in 1933, and none in 1934. Greece had recourse to the Council of the League of Nations, which submitted the matter to the Permanent Court of International Justice. The Court by its Advisory Opinion of April 6, 1935, upheld the Greek claim and held that Albania violated the stipulations of the declaration for the protection of minorities. Some Greek schools reopened a little later, but teachers and pupils could hardly work in the existing atmosphere of terrorism.

Then came Italy's invasion of Albania in 1939, which was a clear premonition of what happened later. Italy attacked Greece on the 28th of October, 1940, and was repelled by the Greek forces on this very territory of Northern Epirus once more consecrated by Greek bloodshed in defense against aggression.

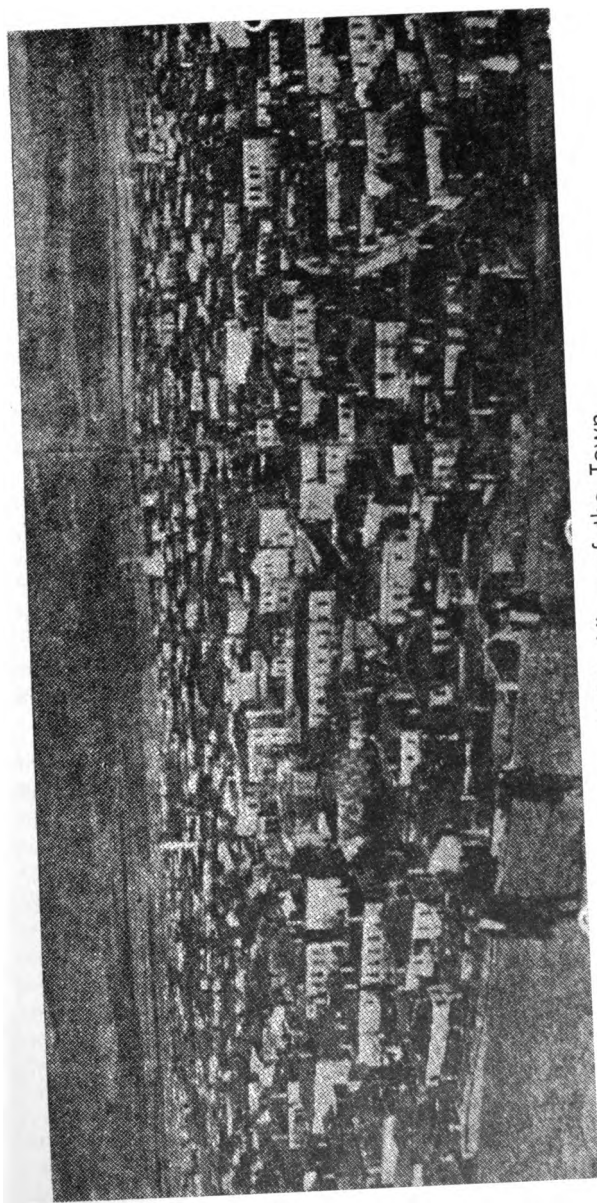


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The conclusions of this historical review are evident: the fate of Northern Epirus was never decided after consultation of the population concerned, and the legitimate claims of Greece were sacrificed in order to satisfy Austria-Hungary's and Italy's interests in 1913 and Italy's imperialist ambitions in 1920-1924. Greece occupied Northern Epirus by virtue of conquest as a result of the Balkan war of 1912 against Turkey. It occupied it from 1914 to 1917 during the World War at the invitation of the Great Powers. Its claims were recognized by Italy under the Venizelos-Tittoni accord of 1919, by the United States Senate and by the American, British and French delegations at the Peace Conference.

At the issue of this war the frontiers between Greek Epirus and Albania should be determined on the basis of the above described ethnological and cultural picture of Northern Epirus and also of the strategic aspect, which would guarantee security to Greece, and the economic welfare of the population.

The security requirements for Greece are self-evident, as a glance at the map will show. The pre-war boundary line is a winding line giving to Albania, just parallel to the frontier, the great trunk road from Santi-Quaranta to Korytsa, thus permitting easy movement of troops. Tepeleni, the ancient gateway into Epirus, dominates the approaches to the Janina plain down the Voyussa River on the east and the Drinos River on the west. As the campaign of 1940 proved, the Greek army based at Janina was at an enormous strategical disadvantage at the opening of the campaign and its effective action could be hopelessly paralyzed from the start, in view of the fact that the central approaches from north-west in the hands of the Fascists and the flanks were secured to them. In 1940 the enemy marched down the coast all the day to Parga with the greatest ease and through his invasion on the east toward Metsovo nearly blocked the Greek army in Janina. The fact that the Greek army was able to turn back the invaders does not disprove this analysis.



KORYTSA: View of the Town

Another observation is that, as the frontier stood before the war, the major part of the Greek island of Kerkyra (Corfu) lies opposite the south-westernmost extension of the Albanian frontier from Cape Stylos to Santi-Quaranta. Corfu was thus exposed completely to the enemy and the horrible ordeal received by the island from the Italian air force during 1940-1941 is testimony to this fact.

Thus it may be said that the frontier imposed upon Greece toward Albania at the end of the last war was one that could not be imposed upon a country forced to her knees after fighting an unsuccessful war; and this was not the case of Greece. Of course, this frontier was imposed at the demand of Italy, which had the motives which the whole world now knows.

A rational frontier would start from the Bay of Gramala below Valona, to the base of the inaccessible Acrokeraunian Mountains, following these mountains east to the chain of Mt. Kjore (6,620 feet), north-east to the summit of Cepin (6,055 feet), east to the narrows of Tepeleni and Kleisura, along the heights of the Dangli Mountains, north-east along the mountains of Ostrovitse and Kamne to join the Yugoslavian frontier at Lake Okhrida.

Nature appears to have closed the communications between the valley of Argyrocastro which would be left to Greece from the Bay of Valona in Albania. The communication between the two valleys is possible only across difficult routes. In contrast, below this frontier, the mountains shrink, the valley of Argyrocastro widens and the access to the sea, at Santi-Quaranta, is most easy by a motor road of about 30 miles through Delvino. Thus Janina and Argyrocastro both belong naturally to whoever possesses Santi-Quaranta. The territory can be commanded in its entirety through the routes from Janina north to Argyrocastro and west to Santi-Quaranta.

The same is true of the valley of Korytsa to the east. This is also linked to Janina and Santi-Quaranta and forms with the valleys of Janina and Argy-

rocastro a geographic unity. It is securely protected by the Dangli Range and prevents the interception of direct communications between Epirus and Western Macedonia. No other communication exists between the eastern and western part of the frontier beyond the long, difficult and round-about route of Janina through Metsovo, Grevena and Kastoria.

On the coast the possession of Janina and Corfu by Greece presupposes the possession of Santi-Quaranta and of the coast to the Bay of Gramala. It is through the port of Santi-Quaranta that Janina can most easily receive reinforcements and food. The security of Corfu makes it imperative for Greece to possess the coast to the Bay of Gramala for by its proximity and arch-like configuration it commands Corfu. This solution would give to Greece between Corfu and the Epirote littoral a naval and submarine base with both its exit and entrance in Greek hands of the highest defensive value. And should an international force be established at the issue of this war, Greece would undoubtedly place this base and facilities for an air-base at the disposal of such international force, so as to give security to both Greece and Albania.

The aspect of the economic welfare of the population also militates in favor of this solution. The pre-war boundary line left Janina, the capital and principal city of Epirus, and its valley cut off from communication with the Adriatic Sea at Santi-Quaranta. Its only connection was with the port of Preveza, which afforded inferior facilities because ships of substantial tonnage cannot enter this port, while Santi-Quaranta, accessible to the largest ships, can assure communications with Corfu, Italy, the Adriatic ports and Western Europe. Also the region of Khimara, separated from the interior by inaccessible mountains and from Valona by considerable distance by sea, is exclusively dependent on this port and Corfu as outlets to its products. The district of Argyrocastro is naturally dependent on Janina and Santi-Quaranta and, separated from them, would be condemned to stagnation.



**EPIROTS FROM THE VILLAGE OF FENIKI, ON THE RUINS OF THE
ANCIENT FORTRESS**

The great trunk road from Santi-Quaranta to Korytsa establishes such a geographic link that the whole region of Northern Epirus is in absolute economic solidarity with Janina. On the other hand, the linking of the natural frontiers of Epirus and Western Macedonia as indicated above would restore the economic connections between the two regions which had always existed before they were separated by the thrust of the frontier of Albania southward to include the valley of Korytsa. Indeed, Korytsa and the Western Macedonian towns of Florina and Kastoria form an economic unit, mutually dependent as supply centres and outlets and connected by rail through Florina with the large centre of Salonika.

EPILOGUE

By BASIL J. PHOTOS

The author, Edward Capps, died in 1950, before he could see his proposal for the disposition of Northern Epirus become a reality, and indeed, it has not yet come to pass. He was, as far as we know, one of the last American historians to recognize the existence of Northern Epirus. Now, in maps, geographies, current histories and encyclopediae, the area is known simply as part of Albania.

At the Paris Peace Conference in 1946, Greece brought up its claims on Northern Epirus, but withdrew the question at the request of Britain and the United States, who apparently felt the time was not quite ripe in view of Russia's attitude. Molotov objected to discussion of the topic saying it would be "a very dangerous thing because it is calculated to create trouble in the Balkans." The problem of Northern Epirus was transferred to the Council of Foreign Ministers, but this body has become inoperative due to the differences between the Communist bloc and the western powers, so the question still hangs in mid-air. What kind of trouble Mr. Molotov expected is not explained, but we may surmise that the possibility of loss of territory within the Communist sphere is what disturbed him.

Secretary of State James Byrnes immediately defended the right of Greece to present its case, and was supported by England. The Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate unanimously approved a resolution awarding Northern Epirus to Greece. But the Western Powers did not exert their full efforts on behalf of the Greek claims at that time, and an occasion to do so has not arisen since.

The Communists gained control of Albania in 1944 by promising the Epirotes the opportunity to vote on the question. Needless to say, this never came to pass.

We know that before 1939 the population of Albania was about 900,000. Recently Enver Hoxha, the Communist dictator, has stated that the population has doubled, which gives us official evidence that the number of Greeks in Northern Epirus must surely have increased in numbers as well as the Albanians.

The regime of Hoxha has made every attempt to eliminate Greeks from Northern Epirus by genocide, elimination of Greek churches and schools, transferral of many Greeks to concentration camps and by enforcing collectivism upon them.

In the northern part of Albania food is plentiful; goods are readily available. However, in Northern Epirus food is scarce, job opportunities scarcer, and in general the necessities of life are withheld in order to induce the Greek population to move northward where they will become more and more enmeshed in the Albanian way of life.

During the Greek civil war (1947-1950) Albania and Yugoslavia were bases for the Communist guerrillas. When the Communists were finally defeated they retreated into Albania destroying Greek villages in their path and taking prisoner many Greeks, even separating children from their parents. Now in 1963 these hostages remain in Albania, and the first of them have just this spring been permitted to return to Greece. The children who have grown up in Albania have been educated in nationalist Albanian schools, and are receiving special training in communistic agitation techniques which they will be expected to use when they return to Greece.

Despite the attempts of Albania to eliminate the last vestiges of Greek Nationalism from the inhabitants of Northern Epirus, the desire for freedom remains. In 1959 and again as recently as the fall of 1962 there have been uprisings against Hoxha and the communist Albanian rule. It is well known that the Greeks were the originators of the concept of democracy and it is not likely that they will give up their right to it easily.

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